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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6861  
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RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 7994  
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO PRIORITY 8027  
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: EUROPE: FRANCE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION; SAO  
PAULO

"Post-Gaullist France Will Be More Rational"

Center-right national circulation daily O Estado de S. Paulo's Paris correspondent Giles Lapouge commented (5/4): "Ten days after Sunday's election, Jacques Chirac will depart after 12 years as France's president. France will then initiate a new chapter in its history. Who will be responsible for leading the nation to that unknown scenario? Wednesday's debate between obstinate rightist Nicolas Sarkozy and leftist Madonna Sgolhne Royal did not clarify it.... Both entered politics after Charles de Gaulle's death, and there will be a turning point in this regard.... France is expected to enter the post-Gaullism era [whoever the winner will be]. A new generation, a new memory and a new future! The relation with the US will be more tranquil. Relations with Africa, Israel and the Arab nations are also expected to change. So far these relations were poisoned by the Gaullist idea of France's grandeur, of its almost divine mission in history. Both the socialist and the rightist will create a diplomacy that is expected to be more rational, more realistic, less rigid and less inspired by the anti-Americanism sentiment with which De Gaulle contaminated all his successors (expect for Giscard d'Estaing)."  
McMullen